



Feb. 12, 2004

TO: FCC Proposed Rulemaking Rural Health Care Support Mechanism WC Docket NO\o. 02-60

FROM: Mayers Memorial Hospital District

Subject: **Negative Impacts of RUCA for Our Hospital**

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We are a small rural district hospital located in the northeastern corner of Shasta County that serves portions of rural Lassen and Modoc county. Under the RUCA methodology, our hospital will no longer be considered rural. The benefits we receive through the universal service support mechanism enable us to have telemedicine links to Redding, Sacramento and other tertiary facilities. Shasta County is in the process of closing their 15 bed inpatient psych unit. Our hospital will be dependent on telemedicine after July 1, 2004 to get any psych consults from Redding, as all the psych inpatients get pushed out into community general acute care hospitals, such as ours

Please give thought to the plight of small rural facilities that will be impacted by the curse of geography that puts us in a distant corner of a populous county. We would hope that grandfathering existing facilities as recipients of Universal Funding, or some appeal mechanism would be part of your implementation plan.

Jerald M. Fikes, CEO
Mayers Memorial Hospital District